We claim:

1. A hydrophilic matrix formulation suitable for once-a-day administration comprising:

   a. divalproex sodium, and;

   b. said divalproex sodium is in admixture with a sufficient quantity of a pharmaceutically acceptable polymer, so that said formulation exhibits the following in-vitro dissolution profile, when measured in a type 2 dissolution apparatus (paddle) at 100 rpm, at a temperature of 37 $\pm$0.5 C, in 500ml of 0.1N HCl for 45 minutes, followed by 900ml of 0.05M phosphate buffer containing 75 mM sodium laurel sulfate (pH5.5) for the remainder of the testing period:

      i. no more than about 30 % of total valproate is released after 3 hours of measurement in said apparatus;

      ii. from about 40 to about 70% of total valproate is released after 9 hours of measurement in said apparatus;

      iii. from about 55 to about 95% of total valproate is released after 12 hour of measurement in said apparatus, and;

      iv. not less than 85% of total valproate is released after 18 hours of measurement in said apparatus.

2. The formulation according to claim 1 in which said formulation exhibits the following in-vitro dissolution profile:

      i. from about 15% to about 30% of total valproate is released after 3 hours of measurement in said apparatus;

      ii. from about 40% to about 70% of total valproate is released after 9 hours of measurement in said apparatus;

      iii. from about 55% to about 90% of total valproate is released after 12 hours of measurement in said apparatus, and;

      iv. not less than 88% of total valproate is released after 18 hours of measurement in said apparatus.

3. The formulation according to claim 1 in which said formulation exhibits the following in-vitro dissolution profile:

   i. from about 15% to about 27% of total valproate is released after 3 hours of measurement in said apparatus;

   ii. from about 44% to about 69% of total valproate is released after 9 hours of measurement in said apparatus;

   iii. from about 59% to about 90% of total valproate is released after 12 hours of measurement in said apparatus, and ;

   iv. not less than 88% of total valproate is released after 18 hours of measurement in said apparatus.

4. The formulation according to claim 1 in which said divalproex sodium is present in the amount of from about 40 to about 80w/w% based upon the total weight of the formulation.

5. The formulation according to claim 3 in which said polymer is a water soluble hydrophilic polymer is selected from the group consisting of polyvinylpyrrolidine, hydroxypropyl cellulose, hydroxypropylmethyl cellulose, methyl cellulose, vinyl acid copolymers, methacrylic acid copolymers, maleic anhydride/methyl vinyl ether copolymers and mixtures thereof.

6. The formulation according to claim 5 in which said divalproex sodium is present in the amount of from about 45 to about 65 w/w%, based upon the total weight of the formulation.

7. The formulation according to claim 6 in which said polymer is present in the amount of from about 20 to about 50 w/w%, based upon the total weight of the formulation.

8. The formulation according to claim 7 which further comprises one or more pharmaceutically acceptable excipients.

9. A method for treating migraine comprising administering a formulation according to claim 1 to a patient in need thereof.

10. A method for treating epilepsy comprising administering a formulation according to claim 1 to a patient in need thereof.

11. A method for treating bipolar disorders comprising administering a formulation according to claim 1 to a patient in need thereof.

12. The formulation according to claim 1, which when ingested orally produces a C_{max} that is statistically significantly lower than the C_{max} produced by a delayed release divalproex sodium tablet, when each is determined at steady state in a fasting population.

13. The formulation according to claim 12 which:

a) produces a C_{min} that is not statistically significantly different from the C_{min} produced by said delayed release divalproex sodium tablet, when each is determined at steady state in a fasting population, and;

b) said formulation produces an AUC value that is equivalent to the AUC value generated by said divalproex sodium delayed release tablet, when each is determined at steady state in a fasting population.

14. A hydrophilic matrix formulation suitable for once-a-day administration comprising:

a. divalproex sodium, and;

b. said divalproex sodium is in admixture with a sufficient quantity of a pharmaceutically acceptable polymer, so that said formulation exhibits the following in-vitro dissolution profile, when measured in a type 2 dissolution apparatus (paddle) at 100 rpm, at a temperature of 37 $\pm$ 0.5 C, in 500ml of 0.1N HCl for 45 minutes, followed by 900ml of 0.05M phosphate buffer containing 75 mM sodium laurel sulfate (pH5.5) for the remainder of the testing period:

i. from about 15% to about 27% of total valproate is released after 3 hours of measurement in said apparatus;

ii. from about 44% to about 69% of total valproate is released after 9 hours of measurement in said apparatus;

iii. from about 59% to about 90% of total valproate is released after 12 hours of measurement in said apparatus, and;

iv. not less than 88% of total valproate is released after 18 hours of measurement in said apparatus.

15. The formulation according to claim 14, which when ingested orally produces a C_{max} that is statistically significantly lower than the C_{max} produced by a delayed release divalproex sodium tablet, when each is determined at steady state in a fasting population.

16. A hydrophilic matrix formulation suitable for once-a-day administration comprising:

a) a valproate compound, and;

b) said valproate compound is in admixture with a sufficient quantity of a pharmaceutically acceptable polymer, so that said formulation exhibits the following in-vitro dissolution profile, when measured in a type 2 dissolution apparatus (paddle) at 100 rpm, at a temperature of 37 $\pm$ 0.5°C, in 500ml of 0.1N HCl for 45 minutes, followed by 900ml of 0.05M phosphate buffer containing 75 mM sodium laurel sulfate, pH5.5, for the remainder of the testing period:

i. no more than about 30 % of total valproate is released after 3 hours of measurement in said apparatus;

ii. from about 40 to about 70% of total valproate is released after 9 hours of measurement in said apparatus;

iii. from about 55 to about 95% of total valproate is released after 12 hour of measurement in said apparatus, and;

iv. not less than 85% of total valproate is released after 18 hours of measurement in said apparatus.

17. The formulation according to claim 1 in which said formulation exhibits the following in-vitro dissolution pattern:

i. from about 15% to about 30% of total valproate is released after 3 hours of measurement in said apparatus;

ii. from about 40% to about 70% of total valproate is released after 9 hours of measurement in said apparatus

iii. from about 55% to about 90% of total valproate is released after 12 hours of measurement in said apparatus

iv. not less than 88% of total valproate is released after 18 hours of measurement in said apparatus.

18. The formulation according to claim 1 in which said formulation exhibits the following in-vitro dissolution pattern:

i. from about 15% to about 27% of total valproate is released after 3 hours of measurement in said apparatus;

ii. from about 44% to about 69% of total valproate is released after 9 hours of measurement in said apparatus

iii. from about 59% to about 90% of total valproate is released after 12 hours of measurement in said apparatus

iv. not less than 88% of total valproate is released after 18 hours of measurement in said apparatus.

19. A method for the treatment of epilepsy in a patient in need thereof comprising:

a) the administration of a single daily dose of at least one divalproex sodium formulation according to claim 1 in which said daily dose is from 5% to 35% greater than the corresponding total daily dose that would be required for the patient consuming a delayed release divalproex sodium tablet, and;

b) when said formulation is ingested orally said formulation produces:

i) a C_{max} that is statistically significantly lower than the C_{max} produced by the delayed release divalproex sodium tablet, when each is determined at steady state in a fasting population,

ii) a C_{min} that is statistically significantly higher than the C_{min} produced by said delayed release divalproex sodium tablet, when each C_{min} is determined at steady state in a fasting population;

iii) an AUC value that is equivalent to the AUC value generated by said divalproex sodium delayed release tablet, when each AUC is determined at steady state in a fasting population;

c) with the proviso that the pharmacokinteic comparison in (b) is based upon total daily doses that differ by a factor of from 5 to 30%, when compared on a milligram to milligram basis.

20. The method according to claim 22 in which the total daily dose of said formulation is about 10% greater than the total daily dose of said delayed release divaproex sodium tablet.

21. The method according to claim 19 in which said patient consumes a formulation according to claim 13.